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Summary record of the 17th meeting
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Chairman: Mr. Maurer ..... (Switzerland)
Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. Kelapile

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 132: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 (*continued*)

International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO
(A/64/6 (Sect. 13)/Add.1 and A/64/7/Add.10)

1. **Mr. Yamazaki** (Controller), introducing an addendum to section 13, International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO (ITC), of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 (A/64/6 (Sect. 13)/Add.1), said that the Centre, a joint body of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO), which shared equally in funding its regular budget, was mandated to provide technical assistance to facilitate the integration of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and in particular the least developed countries, into the multilateral trading system through export promotion and international business development. The Centre's programme of work would continue to be reviewed annually by the Joint Advisory Group, its main intergovernmental policy forum, which was open to members of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and WTO. The WTO General Council and the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board reviewed the report and recommendations of the Joint Advisory Group annually.

2. ITC had recently completed a change management process based on the findings of a comprehensive external evaluation and aimed at increasing overall impact, implementing results-based management and better communicating the Centre's best practices. The proposed resource level for ITC for the biennium 2010-2011 was based on the strategic framework approved by the General Assembly. The Centre's activities in the coming biennium would focus on five main business lines: export strategy; business and trade policy; trade support institutions; trade intelligence; and exporter competitiveness.

3. The proposed overall level of resources for ITC for the biennium 2010-2011 was 72,089,000 Swiss francs for post and non-post requirements. The proposed United Nations share amounted to $30,037,083, a decrease of 2.7 per cent compared to the revised appropriation for 2008-2009. Extrabudgetary resources for 2010-2011 were estimated at 90,600,000 Swiss francs, given that financial resources for trade-related technical assistance had increased exponentially and the Centre had been identified by donors as an important recipient of such assistance. ITC was also negotiating with donors for the funding of large-scale integrated programmes, particularly in Africa. The Centre's proposed staffing comprised 166 posts funded by the regular budget and 20 posts funded by extrabudgetary resources.

4. **Mr. Kelapile** (Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/64/7/Add.10), said that the estimated resource requirements for ITC for the biennium 2010-2011 amounted to 72.1 million Swiss francs before recosting, representing a net increase of 5.8 per cent compared with the appropriation for 2008-2009, owing primarily to the proposed establishment of 12 additional posts. Miscellaneous income for 2010-2011 was projected to be 700,000 Swiss francs, the same level as in the current biennium. The budget would be funded equally by the United Nations, acting through UNCTAD, and WTO: the contribution of each parent organization was estimated at 37.6 million Swiss francs after recosting, or $31.3 million.

5. With respect to the proposed post requirements, the Advisory Committee noted that, following an internal assessment, the number of new posts requested for ITC had decreased from 19 to 12. It had been informed that those 12 posts were technically specific and were geared towards priority areas. The Advisory Committee recommended that 8 of the 12 posts should be established and that a further two posts should be funded through general temporary assistance as their functions might not be required on a continuing basis. It also recommended acceptance of the proposed abolition of two General Service posts and found the request for non-post resources acceptable, bearing in mind that it would have to be adjusted in light of the recommendations on posts.

6. The Advisory Committee's report also contained comments on other issues, including the outcome of the change management process, work still to be done on results-based budgeting and coordination among the Centre, UNCTAD and WTO.

7. Subject to the recommendations set out in its report, the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the Secretary-General's proposals.

8. **Mr. Elhag** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group strongly supported the work of ITC, since trade was a major contributor to development. ITC provided much-needed technical cooperation to increase the trade and export potential of small and medium-sized businesses in developing countries; that, in turn, had a positive impact on poverty reduction and employment and contributed to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

9. Additional investments in trade-related capacity-building were more urgent than ever to help developing countries weather the financial and economic crisis, which had led to a decline in exports from those countries. ITC should make further efforts to support the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as African countries.

10. The current proposals represented a timely attempt to bridge the gap left when the Secretary-General, in his report on strengthening the development pillar of the United Nations (A/62/708), had refrained from proposing an increase in the Centre's capacity. In that connection, the Group would seek clarification in informal consultations as to why the original estimate of 19 posts had been reduced to 12 and whether the level of posts in the Office of the Executive Director was commensurate with the responsibilities of that Office.

Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance and Office of Central Support Services (A/64/6 (Sect. 28D)/Add.1, A/64/6 (Sect. 33)/Add.1 and A/64/7/Add.11)

11. **Mr. Yamazaki** (Controller), introducing two addenda to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011, said that the first, on the management of United Nations overseas properties (A/64/6 (Sect. 28D)/Add.1), responded to General Assembly resolution 63/263 by defining the current and future proposed interaction between the Secretariat in New York and other duty stations for construction and long-term renovation projects, including the division of roles, responsibility and accountability. The Secretary-General proposed to enhance the role of the Office of Central Support Services in coordinating and providing support to overseas duty stations or offices away from Headquarters in all areas of facilities management, in collaboration with each office's Executive Secretary or Director-General.

12. With respect to a plan for regular preventive maintenance of the Organization's properties, as called for by the Advisory Committee (A/64/7), a strategic capital review of facilities at all offices away from Headquarters was proposed. It would address the concerns related to global facilities management and would establish an Organization-wide perspective on needs and priorities in the development of new facilities and major maintenance of existing facilities, thus helping to ensure adequate support for the relevant duty stations. To that end, the Office of Central Support Services had already launched the initial phase of the review.

13. The second addendum, on a strategic heritage plan at the United Nations Office at Geneva (A/64/6 (Sect. 33)/Add.1), provided additional information on the proposed conceptual engineering study at the Office to develop a long-term preservation programme for the Palais des Nations. The largest United Nations-owned building complex after Headquarters, the Palais des Nations was in need of considerable renovation and repair. In 2009, an engineering consultant had provided a preliminary outline of the building's current status and facilities-related issues. The current addendum outlined the proposed next steps in developing the plan. The projected resource requirements for the conceptual engineering study in the biennium 2010-2011 had already been included in the relevant fascicle of the proposed programme budget (A/64/6 (Sect. 33)).

14. **Mr. Kelapile** (Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/64/7/Add.11), said that, in its first report on the proposed programme budget (A/64/7), the Advisory Committee had recommended approval of the resources requested to enhance the role of the Office of Central Support Services in coordinating and providing facilities management support to overseas duty stations or offices away from Headquarters. It had also indicated that the arrangements for planning, managing and monitoring projects for the development of new facilities and major maintenance, as well as the procedures for approval of such projects, should be reviewed in order to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all involved. The measures set out in the addendum (A/64/6 (Sect. 28D)/Add.1) were a step in the right direction

but did not go far enough. The Office of Central Support Services should have a stronger role and responsibility should be clearly assigned for the Organization-wide prioritization of needs in order to ensure an adequate overview and a long-term perspective.

15. Turning to section 33 of the proposed programme budget, he said that the Advisory Committee recommended approval of the $1.1 million proposed by the Secretary-General in his initial estimate for phase two of the plan for renovating the Palais des Nations, which would consist of an engineering study to develop a project plan. The addendum provided additional details that had come to light following the completion of phase one in August 2009.

16. The Advisory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should take note of the reports contained in the addenda and approve the related resources under the relevant sections of the proposed programme budget. It was concerned, however, about the precedent created by the issuance of addenda to the initial budget proposal to further justify resource requirements. The initial budget submission should form the basis for decision-making except in extraordinary circumstances.

Agenda item 131: Programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009 (*continued*)

Agenda item 132: Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011 (*continued*)

Capital master plan (*continued*) (A/C.5/64/L.7)

Draft resolution A/C.5/64/L.7: Capital master plan

17. *Draft resolution A/C.5/64/L.7 was adopted.*

Agenda item 140: Report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (*continued*) (A/C.5/64/L.6)

Draft resolution A/C.5/64/L.6: Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on its activities

18. *Draft resolution A/C.5/64/L.6 was adopted.*

Agenda item 163: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 1863 (2009) (*continued*) (A/C.5/64/L.8)

Draft resolution A/C.5/64/L.8: Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 1863 (2009)

19. *Draft resolution A/C.5/64/L.8 was adopted.*

Agenda item 137: Human resources management (*continued*) (A/C.5/64/L.9)

Draft decision A/C.5/64/L.9: Provisional Staff Rules

20. **Ms. Pollard** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management) said that the Secretary-General's proposals on the implementation of continuing appointments (A/64/267) had been made pursuant to the General Assembly's request in its resolution 63/250. The Office of Human Resources Management had, however, been unable to answer all of the questions regarding continuing appointments that had been raised by the Fifth Committee during its deliberations and by the Advisory Committee in its report (A/64/518). The Secretariat therefore wished to revise its approach and propose a new model. The Assembly would be briefed at the first part of the resumed sixty-fourth session in March 2010 and the new proposal would be submitted to it at the main part of its sixty-fifth session.

21. *Draft decision A/C.5/64/L.9 was adopted.*

22. **Mr. Råsbrant** (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the European Union; the candidate countries Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; and, in addition, Armenia and Ukraine, said that completing the reform of the contractual regime adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-third session was extremely important. During the informal consultations, the European Union had sought clarifications and supplementary information that were essential for taking a well-informed decision. He was disappointed that the Secretariat had not been in a position to provide those supplementary elements and that the Assembly was consequently unable to take a decision at the current session. However, he appreciated the Assistant Secretary-General's frankness in the matter. Given the crucial nature of the agenda item, he hoped that the revised proposal and related

reports would be introduced early in the sixty-fifth session.

23. **Mr. Elhag** (Sudan), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said he was surprised that the Secretariat had been unable to answer questions raised by Member States, given that it had had nearly a year to prepare for the adoption of the final stage of the new contractual framework. Ensuring the staff's well-being was of the utmost importance to the Group; it was therefore concerned about the decision to postpone consideration of the implementation of continuing appointments. He hoped that immediate notification of the staff would help dispel any misunderstanding about the current situation and that the staff would be involved in the Secretariat's further work on the issue so that human resources management reform could be completed at the earliest opportunity.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.